

Careconnect Health Insurance Group: Family-Friendly Bike Trails To Try This Spring



The best way to celebrate spring is to get outside and enjoy it. And one of the best ways to do that is to hop on a bike. Pick the right route and you'll get fresh air, scenic views and plenty of exercise. Even an easy ride with friends or family counts toward your recommended 150 minutes of moderate activity per week; if you pick up the intensity you'll rack up even more heart-healthy benefits.

Finding safe and enjoyable [biking spots](#) can be a challenge, though, especially if you're new to the sport or want to introduce your kids to it. So we asked [cycling experts](#) in the New York metro area for their favorite family-friendly routes in our backyards. Here are some great trails to try- this month (it's Bike Month, after all!) or all summer long.

Westchester

Rides recommended by the Westchester Cycle Club

North County and South County Trailways: These paved but car-free trails connect to run all the way from Van Cortlandt Park in Yonkers to the town of Somers. (You can keep riding past

Somers, where the trail becomes the Putnam Trailway). Near the Croton Reservoir, pedal over the old train bridge and feel the wooden tracks under your tires.

Old Croton Aqueduct Trail: Part of the Old Croton Aqueduct State Historic Park, this 22-mile path offers a flat, easy ride for mountain or hybrid bikes. (Skinny-tire road bikes aren't recommended.) You'll get a history lesson while you're at it: The aqueduct carried water to New York City from 1842 to 1955.

Blue Mountain Reservation: Partial to mountain biking, or want to try a new off-road challenge? Head to Blue Mountain in Peekskill for 20 miles of rolling hills and technical trails. Follow the markers based on your skill level: yellow for beginners, orange for intermediate, and red for advanced.

Long Island

Rides recommended by Long Island Bicycle Tours

Bethpage Bikeway: This 13-mile trail from Woodbury to Massapequa is flat and scenic, offering views of ponds, forests, and wildlife. You'll have to cross a few busy streets, but the intersections are clearly marked with stoplights and crossing lanes.

Jones Beach Bike Path: This paved path (also known as the Ellen Farrant Memorial Bikeway) runs 5 miles along Wantagh Parkway in Nassau County. You can stroll the Jones Beach boardwalk or cool off with a swim in the ocean after your ride.

Heckscher State Park: More than 20 miles of trails -- including a dedicated bike loop -- can be found at this Suffolk County park. You'll pass through shady dense woods and catch gorgeous views of the Great South Bay.